(c) and (d) The Government of India implements Market Intervention Scheme at specific request of the State Governments to purchase a pre decided quantity of horticultural produce at mutually agreed price. The losses, if any, are shared on 50:50 basis between the Central and State Governments. No proposal was received from the State Government for the Market Intervention Scheme. However, several corrective measures are being taken by the Government of India along with State Governments. The Government of India under the National Horticulture Mission provides assistance *interalia* for post harvest management, market infrastructure including storage units, and market led extension activities. Government of India and Government of Maharashtra are implementing various schemes for development of market infrastructure, onion storage structures, scientific storage, promotion of onion exports, training to farmers for advanced technology of onion production and quality enhancement. Onion Export Facility Center has been established at Indarpur, District Pune for which APEDA has invested 75% of cost of Rs. 3.5 crore and the 25% is borne by MSAMB.

The Government of Karnataka implemented support price scheme of State Government in major tomatoes growing districts like Kolar, Chickmangalore, Chamarajanagar and Mysore and purchased about 30,350 MTs of tomatoes valued at Rs. 607 lakhs through HOPCOMS.

The Andhra Pradesh Government marketing department has provided Rs. 1.00 lakh revolving fund to market Committee to intervene for purchase of tomatoes when ever the prices have fell down less than Rs. 100/- per quintal for marketable tomato. There is no glut for onion in Andhra Pradesh. The department of Horticulture regulated the area by encouraging staggered cultivation of Tomato crop.

Suicides by cotton farmers

3653. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of cotton growers who have committed suicide in the country particularly in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra during the last three years State-wise;

(b) whether there is gradual increase in the number during these years;

(c) if so, causes for such a situation; and

(d) the details of measures contemplated by the Union Government to save the lives of cotton growers in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Self sufficiency in the Production of Bio-Fertilizers

†3654. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of production of bio-fertilizers in the country during the last three years, company-wise;

(b) whether India has become self sufficient in the case of bio-fertilizers; and

(c) if not, the measures being taken to enhance production thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) The quantity of production of bio-fertilizers in the country during 2002-03,2003-04 & 2004-05 is 6,477.53 MT, 10,497.88 MT & 10,594.90 MT respectively. The State wise/company wise production during 2004-05 is given at Statement (see below).

(b) and (c) The production of bio-fertilizers is demand driven. The installed capacity of bio-fertilizer units in the country is about 18,200 MT per annum against which the production was 10,594.90 MT during 2004-05. Thus at present there is self sufficiency in bio-fertilizer production.

However, in order to enhance production of bio-fertilizers in the country, the Government has taken up a new central sector scheme 'National Project on Organic Farming' with effect from October, 2004. Under the new scheme, financial assistance for setting up of bio-fertilizer production units @ 25% of the project cost up to a maximum of Rs. 20.00 lakh per unit is being provided as credit linked back ended subsidy through National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC).

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.